The Bethel Courier.

Volume IV—Number 2 JUNE 1980 Bethel Historical Society

THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BETHEL. This is a scale drawing taken from a photograph circa 1896. To the left of the church is the present barn of the Norseman Inn. An 1880 map indicates that the junction of the Northwest Bethel road and the Rumford road was located between the church and this barn. It may have been the case when the picture was taken. The Rumford road through Mayville passed in front of the church, between it and the house to the right. Men in the foreground are clearing the road of ice cakes.

MAYVILLE, MY MAYVILLE

by Donald G. Bennett

"When I arrived in Bethel at the age of ten in 1790," George Chapman told Dr. Nathaniel True, "the whole country was an unbroken forest, save where it was interrupted by small openings. On the north side of the river, Colonel Eli Twitchell had a small clearing where Curatio Bartlett (the present Red Rooster Motel) now lives." Deacon Ezra Twitchell, Eli's brother, lived where Mrs. Verna Dyke now lives and Captain Eleazer Twitchell, a third brother, had cleared the land where the Norseman Inn now stands but which was first permanently occupied by Moses Mason, Jr., Dr. Mason's father. The fourth spot cleared in Mayville was located approximately where Walter Clark lives today and was to become the homestead of Reverend Eliphaz Chapman and his descendants. Eliphaz Chapman suggested the name of Bethel for the town – from the book of Genesis -- when incorporation was being requested from the General Court of Massachusetts in 1796.

Thus began Mayville in the decade following the end of our war for independence. And if Joseph Twitchell of Sherburne, Massachusetts was later to be called the "father" of Bethel, his descendants most certainly were the "fathers" of Mayville, having cleared three of the four original settlements. Today only a meandering stream which flows from Locke Mountain through the center Mayville carries the Twitchell name which was so prominent in the development of this section and Bethel village.

Over the last 300 years a parade of people and events have focused attention on this rich intervale land on the north side of the Androscoggin River which Ruby Clark Eldridge called "Mayville" because of its spring coverlet of Mayflowers.

Years before the first English settlers arrived in Sudbury Canada, the Anasagunticook Indians had cleared land and organized a village to raise corn on about ten acres in the vicinity of what later was to become the homestead of Reverend Eliphaz Chapman. According to George Chapman and Dr. True, the Indians had apparently abandoned their village quite suddenly, probably after the Lovewell fight in 1725, because when Eliphaz Chapman cleared the land in 1789 - 1791 some twenty cellar - like holes were discovered which seem to have been used for storing

corn and other provisions. Along with numerous implements such as brass kettles, axes and hoes, later used by the new settlers, a skeleton of a young Indian woman was found and identified by the ubiquitous Mollyockett.

As a historical footnote to this era of "Indian cornbelt" activity in Mayville, Walter Clark has recently combed the area looking for artifacts and has found none. However, Eva Ladd Schools recalls discovering many Indian arrowheads, some probably various kinds of tools, in the garden areas around the Ladd farmhouse. Also, if many of the implements left behind by the Anasagunticooks were in fact used by the first settlers, it is understandable that few remain scattered in the area of Mayville's chief Indian settlement.

Familiarity with Mayville's trails probably influenced Tomhegan, who led the 1781 Indian raid against the Sudbury Canada area settlers, to traverse Mayville from north to south before crossing the Androscoggin to attack Jonathan Clark's house (now the Pat Carter Dooen farm) as part of what has been called New England's last Indian raid.

After the Indian raid, the white community caught a severe case of the jitters and took measures to increase its security but the evidence shows that trade with friendly Indians continued. This is gleaned from a short case history of Eli Twitchell.

Captain Eli Twitchell (1759-1845) from Sherburne, Massachusetts joined his brother Eleazer in Sudbury Canada, probably in the early spring of 1782 to start clearing land for a farm situated on property now owned by Paul Carter, the Murray Thurstons and the Donald Bennetts. In May 1782, Eli Twitchell was one of fourteen who signed a petition seeking protection from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts against future Indian raids. His arrival in the town after Revolutionary War service was not without personal difficulties brought on from injuries he had suffered at Bunker Hill. Largely because of this fact, he gave up farming only a year or two later. According to Lapham's history, Eli "built a comfortable farmhouse on the interval below Mr. Bartlett's house". Here, Eli had West Indian goods for sale, made brass clocks and guns, repaired watches and jewelry. He soon acquired a number of customers from among the Indians who brought jewelry to him from Canada to be repaired. Quite logically then, it seems to me, Mollyockett chose to camp near the original Twitchell/Bartlett homestead because, among her other activities, she probably acted as Eli Twitchell's agent and interpreter for his Indian customers. Mollyockett undoubtedly had other reasons for staying near the Twitchell homestead -- Indian traditions, good hunting in the cedar swamp and along the river, access to Indian trails down river to Rumford Point and beyond.

Eli Twitchell's business with Indians from Canada outlasted Mollyockett's residence in Mayville. It is difficult to determine exactly when the Indians stopped coming to this area at all. Since Eli lived to be 86 years old, he quite conceivably could have continued his business well into his seventies after the year 1830. His children, son-in-law and grandchildren were nearby, Bethel was growing and use of the river for commerce increased yearly. However, for the Indians the attraction of Eli Twitchell's jewelry repairs, his guns and brass clocks were outweighed by rapidly diminishing game needed for food on their periodic visits and increasing numbers of white settlers who came into Bethel from towns which had been settled for nearly two centuries and had lost any sense of "frontierism" and association with the Indian trade.

THE SEPARATION OF CHURCHES

Although Mayville has always been a part of Bethel, its separation from Bethel Hill by the river posed problems for its residents until a reliable bridge spanned the Androscoggin. If farming consumed virtually every waking moment for the majority of inhabitants, Barker's ferry across the Androscoggin was an equally important factor in the daily life of this settlement as it linked grain producers with millers located along Mill Brook. Samuel Barker (1762-1831) who in the Revolution was a tailor and part-time mender of George Washington's uniforms came to Bethel, settled not far from Pat Murphy's present house and opened ferry service across the river. The ferry, however, had as a profound effect on Mayville's social life as it did on its economy.

In 1847, parishioners in the western part of Bethel's Congregational Church district built a new church on Bethel Hill replacing one located near the river in the general vicinity of Richard Verville's present home. The inconvenience posed by an additional thirty minutes ride for those in Mayville and North Bethel who attended the Congregational Church resulted in discontent and the organization of their own church, the Second Congregational Church of the West Parish. In the same year, the Reverend David Garland became pastor for Mayville. A new church was erected in 1848 and for the next forty years Garland was its pastor, dying with "his boots on" in the pulpit in the midst of a Sunday service in 1884. In the meantime a bridge had replaced Barker's Ferry, tempers had mellowed and soon after Garland's death, Mayville's parishioners re-united with their former church.

Again as a footnote, in preparing for the 1899 centennial celebration of the West Parish church, a new chapel was added to the original 1847 building and named for Reverend Garland. For a while the now unused church in Mayville served as an exhibition hall for the annual Bethel Agricultural Association Fair.

ITS TIME FOR THE BETHEL FAIR

What else attracted people to Mayville? Well, the fair. For a number of years in the 1890's the Bethel Agricultural Association held an annual fair in Mayville. There were trotting races at Riverside Park. What had been W.R.C.'s private hobby and drawing card for those who could afford to keep racing horses was now open to the "hoipolloi." Besides the races, there were stock shows, crafts, and amusements -- merry-go-round and phonographs, floral and vegetable exhibits, dinners and parades, something for everyone. In 1896, Eli L. Bartlett, great grandson of Eli Twitchell, and the last Twitchell descendent to own the farm later owned by my grandfather won the prize for the largest squash exhibited at that year's fair.

In the aerial photographs taken only a dozen years ago, the outline of the old race track can still be seen. The judges stand at Riverside Park was later moved to Paradise Hill to serve as an airplane observation tower during World War II. So with the visible reminders gone only memories remain. How many of our surviving citizens can still hear the jingle of harness and grunt of oxen leaning into a yoke from this by-gone era of Bethel's past?

HERE COME THE TOURISTS

After the last fair had closed and after the Chapmans had moved from Mayville, this section of Bethel increasingly became host to summer boarders. It started early. According to Eva Bean's notes, Alexander P. Eames took

in general boarders in his "Androscoggin House" -- possibly the same building as shown on the 1858 Oxford County map as "A.P. Eames Store". The Valentine boarding house was noted "as being full" in 1872. Then the timber and the paper barons began buying up the old farms up the river from Mayville where the "city people" were used to summering.

Eva Ladd Schools told me that it seemed that more and more as places closed up the river, the regular guests of these boarding houses migrated toward Mayville. Eva recalls one guest who must certainly rank as the most memorable. She was Miss Olive Standish, a descendent of Captain Miles Standish. First she stayed with the Twitchell sisters, but when they stopped taking boarders, she came to Ladd's Wayside Inn (1928-1972). She arrived every year in May and stayed until October -- every year until she was 99.

Before World War II just about every place in Mayville from Bethaven to my grandparent's place took in summer guests. Starting at the north end: the Edward Bennetts (now the Red Rooster Motel), Liz Wight, Alonzo Chapman, Mary Ladd, Fritz Ernst (Note: the New Yorker under Ernst's management was the first place in Mayville to build a motel style of accommodation), the Twitchells (now Dana Douglass), Henry Enman (now John Harrington) and the Boykers -- Bethaven and now the Norseman after being bought by the Wieses. So in fact, Mayville really had two populations. Some eventually became full time residents -- like Henry T. Finck, New York music critic, author, and friend of W.R.C. who first stayed at the Locke Mountain House in North Bethel for many summers and then bought the house where Mrs. Dyke lives today.

Henry Finck did indeed become a permanent resident of Mayville as did his associate William Rogers Chapman, and before them Eli Twitchell and Moses Mason, Jr. Their mortal remains as well as, I am sure, their spiritual attachment with this our world now rest in that one institution of Mayville which stands out as being far more permanent than all the rest.

THE PIED PIPER OF MAYVILLE

During the course of Mayville's history from 1790 to 1980, the person who more than anyone else caused heads to turn towards Mayville was William Rogers Chapman (1855-1935). Most of those who are at least partly familiar with the "Professor Chapman Legend" think of his last home in Bethel, the one on the corner of Church Street and the Common, as THE RESIDENCE. For W.R.C., however, his keenest sentimental attachment with Bethel must have centered on Mayville. His father died when he was only thirteen weeks old and soon after, his mother, Emily Bishop Chapman, returned with her daughters and the baby to Bethel and to what would be the youngster's home for more than 12 years -- the Chapman farm in the middle of Mayville -- now the property of Dorothy Fadner.

Although his mother later remarried, to a Forham, New York gentleman by the name of William J. Valentine, and moved from Bethel in 1868, this farm remained Chapman property. In 1877, W.R.C. had begun to acquire a musical reputation in the New York area and he had also married a girl from Chicago. The Mayville farm became the newlyweds' summer home until 1881 when it was put up for sale. And at this point I have to insert a small anecdote about the house and a later occupant, Violet Campbell.

Besides the Great W.R., this house was the final home for Violet, a person who must have breathed some of the same air of eccentricity that seemed to work its magic on the house's former owner. According to Dana Douglass who passed the story on to me, Violet did not want anyone in her home so she received visitors and held her receptions in the music room of the Great W.R. -- an addition to the main house which lies at right angle in the rear. Here Chapman held piano recitals in this specially constructed room which had been styled with accoustics in mind. This room served to strengthen W.R.C.'s reputation as Mayville's "Pied Piper" for to it were drawn the *haut monde* of Chapman's musical circle. But the room held more than the sounds of music, for Violet discovered a cache of the great man's love letters which were probably forgotten when the Chapman's eventually did sell the place.

In the last quarter of the 19th Century, Director William Rogers Chapman's home was listed by Boston, New York and Portland newspapers as New York and Bethel. Increasingly he was attracting associates to his Bethel homes in Mayville. Moreover, as an avocation, W.R.C. took up the care and breeding of racing horses. In 1892, according to his biography, he bought his Riverside Farm and pursued his new hobby with a passion -- as a result many in the racing and agricultural world of Maine visited his stables and new, one-half mile track in Mayville. Only four years later, however, Chapman launched into organizing the Maine Musical Festival and his farm was posted for sale. But, again, it was not long before a "Mecca" for Maine's, and for that matter New York's, musical luminaries was established in the "Chapman farm" -- later to be known as Bethaven and now the Norseman Inn. In 1910, the Maine Festival Chorus's annual picnic was held at this farm. Esteem draws tribute from admirers. Inside the farmhouse/inn today are two truly magnificent fireplaces that reflect the esteem in which Director Chapman was held, as each consists of stones contributed from all over the world and from Maine.

In 1926, when the Henry Boykers bought this, the last Chapman farm in Mayville, they continued the traditions begun by the Chapmans. Political receptions replaced musical picnics and innkeeping continues to attract guests from throughout the region.

Riverside Cemetery is that one spot that many of us can pass daily but where we one day stop forever -- for our final rest. With its scenery of pines, the river and mountains, what more beautiful, final setting, so charasteristic of Mayville, could one hope for? My daughter, April, and I enjoy visiting our personal past as well as the past of Bethel. My grandparents, my parents and even some of my great, great grandparents are there as tangible reminders of the Bennett - Crosby Story -- our roots. Now for the last 30 years it has been not unsurprisingly neighbor to Bethel's airport.

Neighbors linked symbolically in the sense that both cemetery and airport are points of departure for flight -- one finite and one infinite.

On a warm summer evening, one can satisfy his sense of history by stopping to visit with those now gone who turned the unbroken forest -- found and remembered by George Chapman over 190 years ago -- into that peaceful, fertile, and scenic corner of this earth called Mayville.

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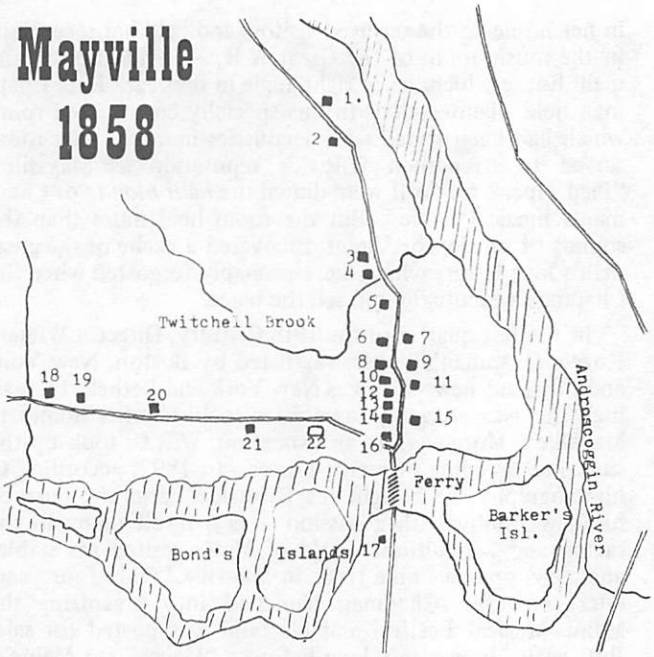

1. B. Bartlett
2. C.T. Bartlett*
3. A. Twitchell*
4. N.F. Twitchell
5. S.B. Twitchell
6. O. Smith
7. L. Adams
8. Mrs. E.B. Chapman
9. E. Goddard
10. T. Twitchell
11. School
12. D. Garland
13. A.P. Eames Store
14. Cong. Church
15. J. Stearns
16. Moses A. Mason*
17. Toll House
18. T. Chapman*
19. J.S. Chapman
20. T.H. Chapman
21. M.A. Barker
22. Cemetery

*Original cleared settlements identified by George Chapman.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This issue of the "Bethel Courier" inaugurates the 1980 season at the Moses Mason Museum, a season which will feature several new ventures: the birthday party for Dr. Moses Mason in May, Sudbury Canada Days in August and the activities of the Society's Art Committee throughout the summer. All of these are described elsewhere in this issue and emphasize the continuing growth of the Bethel Historical Society and the Moses Mason Museum.

As President, I would like to recognize the achievement of our Director, Dr. Stanley Howe, in his selection as one of eighteen participants from across the nation in the Historical Administration Seminar at Williamsburg, Virginia. The experience will undoubtedly have great rewards for Stan and for the Society's future operations.

Catherine Newell

MOSES MASON MUSEUM SUMMER FILMS DURING JULY

Each Wednesday afternoon during July the Museum will feature a film beginning at 4 p.m. These are open to anyone interested and are free. The schedule is as follows: July 2 "Winslow Homer in Maine"; July 9 "Blue Nose Ghosts"; July 16 "The White Heron"; July 23 "Some of the Boys"; July 30 "In Search of Ghosts".

The farm home above, which was owned by Edward E. Bennett at the time it burned in May 1936, was built on land originally cleared by Colonel Eli Twitchell from Sherburne, Massachusetts. The Twitchell farm including the property now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Murray Thurston represents the northern extent of Mayville. The house was built circa 1836. It was the home of Eli Twitchell's descendents -- Julia, his daughter and her husband Barbour Bartlett, their son Curatio (1816-1881), and their grandson Eli L. Bartlett who was born in 1842. Curatio's brother Spencer T. Bartlett developed the part of the former Twitchell farm which is now owned by the Thurston's. After Eli Bartlett's death, the Bennett family purchased the farm in 1914, moving to Bethel from Errol, New Hampshire. The Red Rooster Motel now occupies the land on which the Bartlett homestead was located. It was built by Roland Glines in the 1950's and sold to Paul Carter in 1978. This photograph was contributed by Society Member, Robert Tewksbury, Kerrville, Texas.

INDIAN RAID CELEBRATION

Planning is already underway to celebrate the bicentennial of New England's last Indian Raid which occurred at Bethel on August 3, 1781. Anyone having suggestions for this celebration or interested in participating should contact Society Director Stanley Howe.

SOCIETY SPONSORING OXFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL RESOURCE SURVEY

In January, 1980, the Bethel Historical Society received funding from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to conduct a historic resource survey of Oxford County. The Trustees of the Society have appointed George R. Allen to be Project Director of the Survey. Allen is working with historical societies, schools, local governments and private individuals in gathering data on the architectural and historical character of older buildings in the county. The result of the survey will be an illustrated Oxford County Historic Resources Inventory, to be published by the State. One aim of the survey is to record buildings and sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the Maine Historic Resources Inventory. Another is to permit the county's towns to assess the historic and architectural achievements of their communities in a depth not previously possible.

The Oxford County Survey office is located at the Society's headquarters in the Moses Mason House, but a great deal of the work is being done in the field, with the help of community volunteers from the towns surveyed. A major portion of the Bethel Survey was done in May, and survey work has begun in a number of other communities as well.

LECTURE SERIES AT MOSES MASON MUSEUM DURING AUGUST

Each Wednesday afternoon during August the Museum will feature a lecture beginning at 4 p.m. These will be open to anyone interested and there is no admission charge. Those scheduled to speak during the 1980 season are: August 6, Stuart Martin, "New Pennacook Folks"; August 13, Donald Feeney, "Non-Flowering Plants in the Bethel Area"; August 20, Rebecca Bailey, "Experiences with N.T.L."; August 27, Catherine Newell, "Aaron Draper Shattuck and The White Mountain Painters."

IN MEMORIAM

Frank Edward Hanscom, Jr., died April 2, 1980, life member of the Society and generous donor. Mr. Hanscom, a retired engineer, lived in South Portland but was a native of Bethel and son of the former longtime headmaster of Gould Academy.

Richard S. Waldron, Sr., died April 5, 1980, had been a member since the Society's founding in 1966. A forester for P.H. Chadbourne and Company, he was an active and respected member.

Libbie Kneeland, died April 13, 1980, was an active member who was researching the history of West Bethel at the time of her death. A retired teacher, Mrs. Kneeland was very helpful in the Society's work of researching the local past.

HOWE TO ATTEND WILLIAMSBURG SEMINAR

Society Director Stanley Howe will be one of 18 administrators of historical agencies attending the 22nd Annual Seminar for Historical Administration in Williamsburg, Virginia. Sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Colonial Williamsburg, the American Association for State and Local History and the American Association of Museums, the month long seminar is designed to expose participants to the full range of topics involved in administering a historical agency. These seminars will be conducted by nationally recognized authorities.

Howe, who has been affiliated with the Moses Mason Museum and the Society since it moved into the Moses Mason House in 1974, is a native of Bethel and a graduate of Gould Academy and the University of Southern Maine. He holds a M.A. in American history from the University of Connecticut and a Ph.D. in Canadian Studies from the University of Maine at Orono.

Active in community affairs and in professional organizations, he has also taught on several campuses of the University of Maine and published articles on local history and Canadian affairs.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Eight new life members have been added to the rolls since the publication of the last "Courier." New life members are Mrs. Lillian Grant of Gorham, Maine; Mr. & Mrs. James Monahan of Bethel; Mr. & Mrs. George Stowell, Jr. of West Bethel; Mrs. Ruth Wight of Milford, Connecticut; Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Hall of Bethel; Mr. & Mrs. Richard Verville of Bethel; Mr. & Mrs. Robert Marshall of Bethel. These additions bring to forty-seven the total of life members in the Society, a record number.

BOOK REVIEW
ANDOVER: THE FIRST 75 YEARS

by the Andover Friday Club, Andover, Maine, 1979.

Andover: The First 75 Years is a thoroughly well-balanced book. There is a little something for everyone: early history, social life, business, religion, current events, humor. Add to this a score of interesting pictures and you have a fine production for a town of Andover's size. The style is easy and readable. The obvious enthusiasm of the members of the Friday Club, its producers, is contagious.

There is, of course, the obligatory information on Metallak and Mollockett, those two early Indian inhabitants of the town of Andover. The town's early settlers and their labors are fondly dwelt on. Perhaps the only criticism in this regard is that the material here is a bit too sketchy. The book leans a little heavily in the direction of current history, which it does manage handily. But there is the information on the churches and schools, communications (from the old crank phone system to ultra-modern COMSAT facilities), an expansive tour of the homes and business establishments of the community, reminiscences on the old hotels and boarding houses (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow once stayed here!), and the long roll of public servants in the area. And we encounter the inevitable nostalgia about the covered bridges, the old fairgrounds, ice-cutting, ox-carts, stagecoaches, the old saphouses, the cemeteries, and winter sports facilities. Just for variety, the authors toss in some old-fashioned remedies and homely verse.

Naturally there are flaws, like the occasional insertion of lengthy tabular material -- everyone likes to see his name in print! Or the fact that some of that verse and nostalgia can tend to cloy. But perhaps these are typical pitfalls of any town history. Such a production is an ambitious undertaking for any small town, and in the long run, Andover has carried it off admirably. Few towns its size would even think of attempting projects like this one and *Glimpses of Olde Andover* in such a short space of time. *Andover: The First 75 Years* is an attractive and engaging book. Its attempt at a total overview of the town's history and the sustained treatment of contemporary events should be applauded. For those interested in the area, this book is well worth the investment.

Larry Billings

MOSES MASON MUSEUM TO OPEN JULY 1

The Moses Mason Museum will open on Tuesday, July 1 for the season and continue each day from 1 to 4 p.m. except Monday until Labor Day.

FAYE TAYLOR MEMORIAL ART SHOW

Early this year the Trustees of the Society voted to sponsor an art show each year during Memorial Day Weekend which will be coordinated by the recently formed Art Committee of the Society. It was decided to name this event after the late Faye Taylor who was not only a well-known local artist but also one of the founders of the Bethel Historical Society.

This show will include work from local students and the Society will award cash prizes for the top three pieces in two levels: the high school and middle school level and secondly, the elementary level. Work by adults, both local and from outside the area is also expected and an appropriate prize offered for the work judged to be outstanding.

A SUMMER VISITOR RETURNS TO BETHEL AFTER 120 YEARS

A special feature of the 1980 summer season at the Moses Mason House Museum will be the exhibition of a small oil painting by Aaron Draper Shattuck (1832-1928) entitled "Sunset at Bethel, Maine." The painting was completed in 1860 and is on loan from the Vassar College Art Gallery where it is part of the Elias Magoon Collection.

This painting has associations with northern New England in several ways -- the foremost being its depiction of a landscape scene in Bethel. In addition, the artist was a native of nearby New Hampshire and painted frequently in the White Mountains and throughout New England. Shattuck is considered a member of the Hudson River School of American painting. Works of this group are noted for the celebration of the beauties of the American landscape on canvas, and for a special fascination with the dramatic possibilities of light and sky. Well-known Hudson River School painters include Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand and Frederick Church. This group is often referred to as American's first truly indigenous school of painting -- free from the dictates of more established European traditions.

Although the landscape paintings of this period were termed "Hudson River School" artists sought inspiration from the natural beauties of other regions including the Far West and the White Mountains.

The Shattuck painting, "Sunset at Bethel, Maine" is typical of Hudson River School work in several ways. The small canvas is dominated by a brilliant sky of scarlet and vermillion, contrasting with the cool blues and deep greens of the darkening landscape. Two other northern New England sunset scenes by Shattuck are also in the Vassar collection and again emphasize the dramatic, almost suspenseful sunset in a similar contrasting way. Painters of this school felt the importance of painting from nature -- capturing a specific moment in a specific spot and it is significant that although no really identifiable feature appears in the painting Shattuck has titled it specifically "Sunset at Bethel."

Hudson River School painters usually were attracted to scenes involving a variety of features, mountains, valleys and water and in this, as well, the Shattuck painting is typical. Shattuck, who studied portrait artistry in Boston, was known for his meticulous brushwork. He often combined precisely detailed elements in the foreground of his paintings with a more sketch-like and painterly background.

One historical note concerns the painting's designation as part of the Elias Magoon collection at Vassar College. Magoon, another New Hampshireman, who studied at Colby College, was a minister, art collector, writer, lecturer and friend of Poughkeepsie, New York brewer, Matthew Vassar. Magoon assembled a collection of English watercolors, drawings plus assorted prints and a group of 125 oil paintings commissioned from what he believed to be the best living American painters. The collection, plus related correspondence and 900 art books, was acquired by Vassar College in 1864, and served as the nucleus of the college's art library and gallery. Recent interest in painting of the Hudson River School has brought new attention to the Magoon Collection and its works of art including "Sunset at Bethel, Maine." These were the focus of a major exhibit at the college in 1979. Also exhibited at that time were a number of other paintings and drawings depicting White Mountain scenes including Samuel W. Griggs' "Meadows and Mountains at Bethel."

Throughout the year, the scenery of the Bethel area has been an inspiration to local artists and summer visitors who have interpreted the combination of river, mountains, valleys and sky in vastly differing ways. This year's "summer visitor", Shattuck's "Sunset" reminds us of the fact that during the middle of the nineteenth century this region was an inspiration to a group of painters who were also summer visitors and were also responsible for the first truly American style of painting.

Catherine Newell
Vassar '66

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE SETS 400 FOR GOAL IN 1980

The Membership Committee of the Society announced early in 1980 that a goal of 400 members has been established for 1980. Current membership now stands at 369 only 31 short of the goal. The Committee consisting of chairman E.M. Quinn, Mary Valentine, Barbara D. Brown and Marge Noll expects that this goal can be reached by the end of the year. Anyone wishing to become a member is reminded that a membership application is provided in the back of this newsletter.

GENEALOGICAL COMMITTEE PLANS SURVEY

The Genealogical Committee consisting of Alden Kennett, Chairman Mabel Kennett, Jean Ness, Judy Barker, Gloria Snyder, Floribel Haines and Agnes Haines has undertaken a project to gather the genealogy of everyone currently living in Bethel or having lived in the town. This will be part of the Society's observance of the bicentennial of New England's Last Indian Raid to be celebrated in August 1981. Anyone having any ancestry connected with Bethel is urged to send it to the Society as it may form the genealogical section of a proposed town history which is planned for the 1980's.

ART COMMITTEE FORMED

In a recent action of the Board of Trustees of the Bethel Historical Society an art committee was formed to promote and coordinate the display of art within the Moses Mason Museum. Members of the committee to date are Catherine Newell, Helen Morton, Sue Wight, Katherine Bennett, and Donald Bennett. Anyone interested in serving on this committee is urged to contact any member of the Committee or Society Director, Stanley Howe.

The Committee is interested in locating oil or water color paintings depicting Androscoggin River landscapes prior to 1920 for possible inclusion in this summer's exhibition. If any reader knows of such a work or owns one that they may be willing to loan the museum for the summer, please contact any member of the Committee or the Society Director.

EDITOR'S CORNER

This issue marks the eighth issue of the "Courier" to appear since its inception in December, 1976. Changes appear likely in the future. Advertising may appear in the December, 1980 issue for the first time in order to reduce the cost of printing. There also has been some discussion of producing four issues per year instead of the current semi-annual publication. Changes in format and suggestions for features have also been received. This may be the time to consider the future of the "Courier." Reader comment is encouraged and I look forward to hearing from you as to what direction you feel the "Courier" should go.

DR. MOSES MASON

Editor's Note: This sketch of Dr. Mason appears in a history of "Mason" written by Mrs. Cyrene Jane Cummings Bean from memory at the age of eighty years in about 1910. The original manuscript was donated to the Society by Miss Ruth Bumpus of Farmington, Maine.

"Dr. Moses Mason of Bethel always took a great deal of interest in the settlement of the Grant, since quite a number of the people came from Dublin, New Hampshire where he did. His father and family moved to Maine at the same time Paul Morse did -- in company with them. I have heard him tell how he and the oldest Morse girl quarelled when they stopped on the journey; they were about of an age. There was no grist mill nearer than Bethel Hill. I have heard Ashley Paine say he had taken a bushel of corn on his back and started in the morning to carry it to the mill in Bethel to have it ground. In those days there was no flour or meal of any kind except what grain they raised on the farms and took to be ground. It was only a few years before Dr. Mason found that there was quite a water power in Pleasant River which ran through Mr. Paine's land. He utilized it for power to run a grist mill and built a dam across the head of the falls. The water was taken by a canal to the mill which was built at the foot of the falls. He put in two run of stones and a bolter. Later he put in another bolter for wheat flour only and used the old one for rye and barley, or anything they wanted to have bolted. He built a house for the miller to live in. Later he put up another building and installed machinery for carding wool into rolls and did a good business through the wool-carding season. He also put in a shingle machine and had a good many shingles sawn out.

Edmond Maines from Otisfield bought the lot of land south of the mill lot and cleared up some of the land. He built a house and barn but did not stay. In a few years he sold out to Dr. Mason and moved away. A number of different families lived on that place but after some years the Doctor moved the house down to his mill lot and made a more comfortable home for his miller. A few different ones lived in the old house after he made the newer one over. There never was but one room and a rock chimney. It rotted down after awhile. Sometime in the 1850's he sold the old mill to Abial Bean of New York. When the Grant was incorporated into a town it was called "Mason" in honor of the Doctor. As an expression of his gratitude he built the first bridge across Pleasant River near the mill. At that time there was quite a lot of business going on. There was a large school with 40 or 50 scholars. Now (1910) the town seems almost depopulated. There are only four families who are in any way descendants of those who settled there at an early age."

FOOTNOTES

"Dr. Tuell, our worthy dentist, has the foundation in for a new house on Broad Street near William R. Godwin's. The traders, lawyers, doctors and other citizens prepared some statistics and other interesting matter and had them enclosed in the brick work of the foundation wall, so that some future generation in removing this wall will be surprised by these ancient documents, and it is presumable that this will not occur until all that are now living on the earth will be in the land of silence. Fourteen hundred million of people now living will undoubtedly have passed away ere the doctor's papers will see the light."

Oxford Advertiser, September 14, 1883

"Burglars broke into J. U. Purington's, C. C. Bryant's, Bisbee's and N. F. Brown's on October 8. Officials felt that this was an organized gang. They escaped by stealing a Grand Trunk handcar. However they were able to avoid capture, despite being trailed by a posse. Purington lost over $100 worth of goods."

Bethel News, October 11, 1895

"A Socialist open-air rally was held in Bethel in front of the post office. George A. England of Bryant Pond and F. H. Maxfield of Greenwood City were the speakers."

Oxford County Bethel Citizen, August 20, 1914

"Turnkey H. C. Barker lodged seventeen tramps at the lock-up, last week. On Monday night of this week he entertained seven. They are fed on crackers and cheese with pure cold water."

Oxford Advertiser, November 12, 1897

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

(1) free admission to the museum
(2) special discounts at museum store
(3) preferred rate for meeting room rental
(4) special library and archival privileges
(5) semi-annual newsletter
(6) reduced course fees
(7) voting rights in the Society

To the Membership Committee: I am interested in becoming a member of the Society.
(Please Print)

Name ----------

Address ----------

---------- ----------
Signature

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217

----------Sustaining $2.50 (Individual)
----------Contributing $10.00
----------Patron $25.00
----------Students (under 18 years) $1.00
----------Life over 55 years $50.00 single
----------Life over 55 years $75.00 couple
----------Life under 55 years $100.00 single
----------Life under 55 years $150.00 couple

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FAMILY DATA FORM

Please return to: Bethel Historical Society
Moses Mason House
Bethel, Maine 04217

The Society is interested in collecting family data relating to everyone currently living in Bethel or any persons who haved lived in the town. Maiden names, death dates, places of birth, marriage and death, etc. are encouraged. Your cooperation in completing this form will be appreciated.

Family name:

Road or street on which family lives or lived:

List of Residents: Name Date of Marriage Date of Birth Occupation

How long has the _____ family lived in Bethel? Explain.

Name of first family member to live in Bethel:

Place or places from which that person came to Bethel and/or other towns:

Describe family lineage in Bethel: (Please indicate birth, death, marriage, occupation if known and/or other related information)

Father

Mother

Grandfather

Grandmother

Great Grandfather(s)

Great Grandmother(s)

Please use additional sheets if necessary and feel free to submit as much information as possible.

Bethel Historical Society
Box 12
Bethel, Maine 04217

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